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[Report from the Boston Traveller.]

MEETING OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF IN-  
STRUCTION.

KEENE, N. H., AUGUST 12, 1851.

THE Twenty-second Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Instruction, is now being held at the Town Hall in this place. The first session commenced this morning at 10 o'clock. A numerous audience of ladies and gentlemen were in attendance, most of them members of the Institute, and engaged in teaching in various sections of the Union. The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. Dr. BARSTOW of Keene. The President, GIDEON F. THAYER, Esq., of Boston, then addressed the audience as follows :

*"Respected Inhabitants of Keene :—*Induced by the encouraging assurances of many of your prominent citizens, the American Institute of Instruction has come among you to hold its twenty-second anniversary. It has come to gratify no selfish purpose, to promote no personal interest ; but to do what it may to excite, and to aid in fostering in this community, a desire for improvement in the great concern of humanity—*universal education.*

*"*Its scope is not local to a State, but extends throughout the Union. It has held its annual meetings in all the States of New England, and feels bound to go wherever a special need or strong desire exists for its operation and influence.

*"*It rejoices in the call to this delightful village, and hopes, at the close of its present session, to have added many friends to its cause, and many members to its roll.

"Although the field of its labors is national, it is a child of the Old Bay State; its head-quarters are the capital of that State; and hence—trusting that you cherish the sentiments of your ancestors—we entertain the hope that it will have your sympathy and friendship—not only from your regard to its object, but also because of the place of its origin. Your fathers were warmly attached to old Massachusetts; we hope the same affection rests in the bosoms of their sons.

"In the annals of your town for 1740, we read, that:

"The proprietors being informed that, by the determination of His Majesty in Council respecting the controverted bounds between the province of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, they are excluded from the province of Massachusetts Bay, to which they always supposed themselves to belong:

"Therefore, unanimously voted, that a petition be presented to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, setting forth our distressed estate, and praying we may be annexed to the said Massachusetts province.'

"Your county has been aptly styled the 'Oasis of New Hampshire.' Long may it merit the appellation; and long may the searcher after the waters of truth, intelligence, and civil liberty, find here a resting-place from his toil, and refreshing pasturage for his hungry mind. And while your daughters, by their gentle manners, their domestic virtues, and lady-like accomplishments, induce the sons of other towns and other States to come and make *your* treasures *theirs*, may a bond stronger than that of the national union bind us all together, in those ties fraternal which death only can sever."

Mr. L. C. CHAMBERLAIN of Keene, in behalf of the citizens of this place, thanked the members of the Institute for having honored the town by their presence on the occasion of this anniversary. The town, he said, bore about the same relation to that in which their last anniversary meeting was held, as the State in which it was situated did to the State of Massachusetts. There were no objects of peculiar attraction to be witnessed; but he could assure them that they would find the citizens not indifferent to the cause of popular education. That subject, in fact, had engaged the attention of the citizens of Keene for a long series of years. The State of New Hampshire could not boast of any peculiar excellence in her common schools, but she had long understood that the education of her people must be attended to before any other interests. He congratulated the Institute on the large and enthusiastic gathering, and expressed the hope that their deliberations on this occasion, might result

in much good to the cause which they had assembled to promote. Mr. Chamberlain extended an invitation to the members of the Institute to visit the citizens of the town at their abodes.

The PRESIDENT briefly responded.

The Secretary then read the proceedings of the last annual meeting, held at Northampton, Mass., Aug. 13, 1851.

Reports from several committees upon the business affairs of the Institute, were then read and accepted.

On motion of Mr. SWAN of Boston, a vote of thanks was passed to the Legislature of Massachusetts, for the grant of \$300 per annum, for five years, made at its last session in aid of the Institute.

The President then introduced to the audience Hon. GEORGE N. BRIGGS of Pittsfield, Mass. Mr. Briggs remarked that he was somewhat embarrassed by the hour assigned for his address, for an extemporaneous speaker wanted all the circumstances he could avail himself of, in order to create excitement and enthusiasm. It had been announced that the Introductory Address was to come from him, but whatever remarks he had to make might have been as well assigned to any other part of the session. He wished to consider the subject of education, in relation to the duty of governments in regard to it, and the benefit resulting from the performance of that duty, and also the rights of the children of successive generations, as they followed one after another in human society. He did not doubt that those before him felt that the subject of education was one of present interest, and of future and all-enduring interest. He did not doubt that there was an active generation of men now upon the stage, who would not fail to perform their duty in relation to this important matter. Fortunately, under the dispensation of good and wise laws, we had not now to commence a wise course of universal public education in New England. The system of public education went back to the landing of the Pilgrims. The Puritans laid the platform, and proceeded to establish principles of universal education. Two great principles occupied their minds: they were, the worship of God as their first duty, and the education of children as the next in importance. Following these ideas, they first built meeting-houses and then school-houses. They were wise men; they knew that man possessed an intellectual and a moral nature, and if one was cultivated and the other neglected, evil would of course follow. The head and the heart were two as distinct departments in human nature as were the different departments of government.

He commended to the audience the sentiments of Jefferson on this subject, as expressed in a letter written by him to a lady in Paris. If we built up schools for the sake of cultivating the intellect only, the result would be a predominance of pride and conceit, and a too great neglect of the principles of morality and Christianity. If we built meeting-houses only, we should have a community of well-meaning and piously-disposed persons, but without intelligence to direct their efforts. The chaste and beautiful lines of the poet expressed truthfully the policy of wise men :

" Nor heeds the skeptic's hand,  
While near the School the Church spires stand ;  
Nor fears the bigot's rule,  
While near the Church spire stands the School."

In 1642, twelve years after the settlement of Boston, the General Court passed a law, enjoining it as a duty upon magistrates to see that every child was educated. It was made the duty of the selectmen to look after the subject, and see that no parent, or master, or guardian, was guilty of the barbarism of omitting to learn children to read, and of instructing them in other branches of knowledge. Twelve years after, another law was passed, enjoining it upon all householders to maintain schools a given number of months during the year. Here we see universal free education proclaimed in the form of a statute. Our fathers did more ; they provided that every youth should be educated in some useful calling or trade, and when a father refused to have his son apprenticed, the authorities took the matter into their own hands. Their laws not only made it the duty of the government to provide free schools, but they made it the duty of every parent to send his children to school. Such a law would appear too democratic or undemocratic for modern times. Such a requirement now would arouse the fathers of the land. They would say that they would take the education of their children into their own hands, and needed not the interference of government to direct them in regard to their duty, or to enforce the performance of it. The infant colony on the hostile shores of New England, only twelve years old, numbering only 20,000 persons, surrounded by savages and the ocean, three thousand miles from civilized human life, proclaimed for the first time in the history of human society and government, that every child should be educated, and made it the duty of the community to educate them. Greece had her academies and groves : Rome her philosophers and her teachers ; and her



young men, few and favored, gathered about them and received instruction from their lips, but the great mass of the people were uneducated and slaves. Here broke a new era, here were proclaimed new principles in the history of nations. Those principles are now really the law in Massachusetts. More than six generations of men have passed away, and their law is respected and regarded by every generation in Massachusetts and New England. The true principle was, that the children of the State ought to be educated by the property of the State. This principle ought to be carried out in every government under the sun, in whatever latitude or longitude it might be situated. The only just principle of taxation is, that the best interests of the public require that the citizens of a State should contribute each his just proportion, according to the amount of property he possessed, and which contribution is to be appropriated by law to some great useful public object and end. There was no public object more important than the education of the children of the State. If so, and taxation was right in cases of great public importance, then it was a correct principle that the property of every man should be taxed for the education of every child in the State. It was proper that every child should be educated and become intelligent and refined. It was for the interest of the State that this should be done in an economical point of view ; for the prosperity, industry and wealth of a community were in proportion to its intelligence. An uneducated community was an idle one, and idleness, poverty, ignorance and vice always accompanied each other. If you wished to preserve the morals and elevate the character of a community, you must educate them. We had the choice of supporting mature and ripened vice, or diffusing educational advantages, and having an intelligent and virtuous civilization around us. It was the right of every human being born to be educated. Our declaration of independence declared that all men were endowed with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It was the duty of government to render the life of its citizens happy. Liberty was worth nothing without intelligence. No uneducated people ever acquired or retained liberty. If we would preserve our liberty, we must educate. If the imposition of taxes was the only way in which we could provide for that duty, it was the duty of government to establish and to carry out such an imposition. Labor was made respectable and profitable in New England by intelligence. Such a low estimation of labor as existed in the slaveholding States was occasioned by the fact that the laborers

in that section were mere human machines, acting unintelligently, performing the duties in a merely mechanical manner. But where the laborer was intelligent, it held up its head and maintained an honorable position. Every laborer in every honest vocation claimed an entire equality with his fellow citizens, in their social, and religious, and civil intercourse. Many persons in the community who opposed the principle of taxation for the support of education, were in favor of general education, but contended that every one should educate his own children. Why should they not be taxed for others besides their own children? Why should they not desire to contribute towards the general diffusion of those advantages which had been enjoyed by their own families? They were often called to contribute towards the expense of various public works, and certainly none of these equalled in their immediate importance, or in the beneficial nature of their results, the great object of public education.

The speaker then advocated the propriety and policy of a more liberal expenditure for educational purposes. Better school-houses should be constructed. There was no reason why all our school-houses should not be pleasantly located, and be commodious and tasteful edifices. Able and competent teachers should be selected, and they should be liberally remunerated for their labor. There had of late been a vast improvement in these respects. The Normal Schools had greatly elevated the character of our teachers. Thoroughly trained teachers were now in constant demand, and they were in most cases adequately remunerated. The speaker then suggested that the Constitution of the United States, and those of the several States, should be adopted as studies in all our schools. All our citizens should understand the fundamental law of the land, and not be forced to rely upon the interpretation of any great expounder or political demagogue for interpretation.

The speaker concluded by eloquently and impressively urging the necessity of proper religious education in schools, and recommended urgently that the Bible should be studied in all of them.

#### TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION.

The members of the Institute met at a quarter before two P.M., for the purpose of listening to an exposition of the Phonetic system, from Dr. Stone of Boston, and to the results of the working of that system as exemplified in the persons and presence of four of the children, who have been so successfully taught by Miss Lothrop, in the Warren street Chapel.

The hall was crowded as in the morning, large numbers being unable to obtain seats. The children first read from one of their phonetic books, from a place selected by the President of the Institute, and their remarkably clear enunciation of the sounds of the words, together with their superior intonation of sentences, so much surprised and delighted the teachers that the most perfect silence and attention were secured, interrupted only by manifestations of approbation. They then read several sections from a large book containing language and ideas far beyond their comprehension, and among others, a translation of one of the choicest of Cicero's orations, and one of the most classical productions in the English language. This, too, was executed in a manner no less satisfactory than the previous performance.

The analysis of words came next. And this appeared to be most interesting. Words, long and short, difficult and easy, were asked from all parts of the audience, and were all analyzed by the children correctly, and apparently without effort. The analysis of one long word of fourteen syllables, and thirty-three letters, and on which they had previously practised, took the audience completely by surprise, and elicited warm applause. We know not whether all your readers be familiar with the word, but as we have been fortunate enough to secure it, we transcribe it for the benefit of all who can pronounce it.

*Hohenmarnucaluckapopalockacalagon.*

A new feature was introduced into this exhibition. After analyzing several difficult words, they were called upon to spell them. This they did accurately in almost every instance, the failures being just sufficient exceptions to prove the rule of their correctness.

After a song from the children, Dr. Stone proceeded to state the means by which this result had been accomplished. The children have been taught, in company with forty others, at a private phonetic school, by Miss Lothrop, since October last, when the most of them did not know their letters, while those who could at that time the best spell out a few easy words are now the worst readers in the class. They have been taught by means of a system based upon the principle of a sign for each word, and that invariable. In order to secure this, the phonetic alphabet was used, containing forty letters, viz. — twenty-four consonants, twelve vowels, and four diphthongs. The children, having learned the alphabet, and the method of combining the sounds, are enabled to read with accuracy and preci-

sion, and avoid those difficulties which are in the way of children learning by the common method, and which compel them to retrograde one step for every two that they advance.

The child who undertakes to learn to read by the present alphabet, is taught that the first letter is sounded as in the word *mate*. The word *at* is given to him, and he pronounces it *ate*. He has then to unlearn his previously acquired information, and to give this letter a short sound. And so he has to proceed, changing the sound attached to this same letter, through a long series of words; *many, dollar, was, all, father, &c., &c.* Not only does each letter represent many sounds, but each sound is designated by many more letters, the sound of *a* as in *fate* being presented to the public more than thirty different ways in the authorized spellings of as many different words; so that it is found that the word *scissors* may be spelled in more than two million different ways, each authorized by the usual representation of only six different sounds in many words.

After the conclusion of the explanations, the children read from the common print from passages selected by the officers of the Institute, and read several sentences handed in by different persons, and written in phonographic shorthand upon the black-board. A specimen of reporting closed the exercises.

We learn that this was the twenty-second exhibition given by the children of the phonetic school, and if the others have equalled this, they have been remarkably successful.

The lecture delivered by Mr. D. B. HAGAR of West Roxbury, was upon the subject of the "Supervision of Schools." The lecturer proceeded in the first place, to inquire what were the interests to be supervised. It was of course generally understood that it was the province of schools to train the intellect, but it was not so generally considered that there were physical and moral powers to be developed and cultivated with equal assiduity, and that this important work, in a great measure, belongs also to the school-room. School supervision, to be effective, should comprehend as far as possible all that relates to the body, the intellect, and the heart.

The work that a supervisor should perform related to the general interests. In promoting the first of these, it was his duty to see that suitable edifices were prepared for the accommodation of children; that in situation, size and arrangement, they are adapted to promote the health and comfort of their occupants, and to afford the teacher all desirable facilities for imparting instruction. It was also the work of the supervisor to see that the physical powers of the young were not injured by too severe application to study or by the infliction of improper punishments.



It was the province of the supervisor, also, to see that the teacher was faithful to his trust. The more constant and watchful this supervision, if exercised with discretion and in the right spirit, the more satisfactory would be its results. The faithful teacher was to be encouraged and sustained, while the inefficient and unsuccessful teacher should have the causes of his failure pointed out, and if he be able and willing to pursue a more judicious course, should be allowed to continue in charge of his school; otherwise he should give place to one of higher qualifications. The selection of books was one of the duties of school supervision, and in this selection a thorough acquaintance with the science and art of teaching, a sound judgment, and the utmost care were requisite. In promoting the moral interests, those who had the oversight of schools were under weighty responsibilities. It was their office to see that a high moral influence was exercised over the young, that they were stimulated to action by proper motives, that they cherish right feelings towards each other, that they are trained up with just views of their own and others' rights, that they are taught to obey the mandates of an enlightened conscience.

The lecturer then proceeded to inquire who were the proper persons to perform the work of supervision. He contended that supervisors should be practical teachers, thoroughly acquainted with the business of teaching. Otherwise they were mere theorists. The speculator in education might be suffered to form as many systems and modes of instruction as he chose, but when he possessed power to enforce his views, it became a consideration of great moment, whether he was able to foresee that his plans were at all practicable, and if so, what their results would be. It certainly was not unreasonable to suppose that those who had not practically tested the modes of discipline, of imparting instruction, of developing the thinking powers, of impressing lessons of morality — were not prepared to foretell, with certainty, the effects of any course they may suggest.

It might be urged that at the present day all persons of fair standing in society, and more especially professional men, had been educated, and had seen the operations of modes of instruction, and are hence qualified for superintending the education of others. But the reception of knowledge was by no means accompanied by the faculty of imparting it. A man might obtain a thorough education, and yet be ignorant of the *rationale* of his instruction. Supervisors of schools ought to be practical teachers, in order that they might exert the highest authority in the minds of the scholars, teachers and parents; of scholars, by the

use of instrumentalities best adapted to infuse amongst them a cheerful and lofty spirit; of teachers and parents, by the confidence naturally given, that their strictures and recommendations are not founded on speculation, but on experience. Supervisors should be practical teachers also, that they may be able not only to discover evils, but also to indicate the proper remedy. Any one could find fault, but it was not easy to show how to rectify the evil. Supervisors should point out a failure in any respect, and, what is of more importance, they should designate, not in vague, general terms, but particularly. Their directions, to be useful, must be specific, exact. Such aid was especially needed by the younger laborers under their oversight.

The lecturer then considered the question of the number of school supervisors needed in each town. He contended that the schools of each town should be under the superintendence of one man, and that that man should be amply qualified for the duties of the office, and be liberally compensated. Under the present system indeed, the labor of supervision devolved upon one man, as by common consent the chairman of school committee was generally the only member who gave his attention to its duties. The duties of a school supervisor were in their nature executive. He was not to pass new laws, nor exercise judicial functions. He was only to do what the statute required of him. As in other matters so in the superintendence of schools; the fewer those to whom the work is entrusted, the more deeply would they feel their individual obligations, and the more closely would the public hold them answerable for what they did.

Another reason for the exercise of supervision by one man, is, that the work thus becomes of primary importance in the estimation of the supervisor. School Committees were now composed of men who, with few exceptions, are engaged in some calling upon which they depend for prosperity and standing, and with which their chief interests are connected. The care of schools is in their mind a subordinate matter, and the amount of time and attention devoted to them is limited by the demands of their regular business.

Under the system proposed the oversight of schools would take its true place and become a business of primary importance; and being so directed the superintendent would direct his best efforts accordingly, and the examination of schools would be made much more thorough and just than under the present system. This mode of supervision had been tried in the State of New York, and had been attended with the most satisfactory results.

The lecturer in conclusion answered the objections brought

against the method proposed, that political influences would determine the election of the superintendent, and that his power would be liable to abuse. The first objection applied equally to school committees; and the interests of the superintendent, which would be identified with those of the schools under his charge, would prevent any neglect of his duties or transgression of his prerogatives.

A lecture was then delivered by Mr. SAMUEL W. BATES of Boston, on the "Manifestations of Education in different ages." The lecturer announced it to be his design to show that education has in all ages been affected by the spirit of the times, and in each nation by the peculiar circumstances of that nation; and particularly to inquire what was the leading idea of the present age, and what were its effects upon education. He passed in review briefly the systems of education prevalent in ancient times, to the present day, and glanced at the leading characteristics of different ages, in illustration of the position that these characteristics have always directed in the application of all general truths, and that education has been and must be conducted in accordance with their developments, whatever may have been the causes of these developments. He then proceeded to consider what was the spirit of the present age, and what were its leading ideas; how were they affecting education, and how ought education to affect them.

The predominant ideas of the present age were equality in all relations, and utility in all investigations. The peculiar circumstances of our country had enabled these ideas to manifest themselves in our land with more power than elsewhere. The effects were witnessed in religion, government, education, and in all the relations of society. The fundamental difference in education which they had caused in comparison with the systems of the ancients, was in inculcating that the intellectual powers of all men should be educated, and that knowledge should not be restricted to any privileged class. The lecturer then alluded to the tendency of man to carry every good thing to extreme, as manifested in the radicalisms of the present day. This dangerous tendency to radicalism was only to be counteracted by proper education. He had much faith in the educated common sense of the people, in the strong conservative power which underlies the wild vagaries which we feared, and which was silently but effectually counteracting extreme radicalism. Yet after all much depended upon the next generation, and much of their character depended upon the influences of the school-room. Teachers should think more seriously of their part of this work.

The coming generation should be taught to think, and should be made to realize that liberty was not synonymous with lawlessness, nor equality with agrarianism ; that men were born with different capacities, that respect may be paid to talent, scholarship and wisdom ; that reverence was due to the experience of age ; that obedience was to be given to something besides their own dictates. Then might we hope that the result of the experiment which we were now trying would not be added to the long list of failures which stain the pages of our history and shake our confidence in man and God, but that we should go on giving an unimpeachable example of man's true power in self-government. Our youth should be taught to think ; the showy farces of superficial teaching should be despised. We should cherish thorough instruction and severe discipline. We should remember that the failures in republicanism had not been caused by failure of intellectual strength, but by the destitution of moral and religious principle. Religion was the only safeguard of liberty. Wherever liberty had deigned to dwell on earth, religion had been her attendant spirit.

#### TUESDAY EVENING SESSION.

In the evening a lecture was delivered by Rev. Dr. LEONARD of Dublin, N. H., on the subject of the Present Condition and Wants of Common Schools. He alluded to the importance of the institution of common schools. No one, he said, would deny that the institution had done great good, but that it had not done all that should be done. What was wanted to make the condition of common schools better than it is at present ? Common schools in some places were in a state of improvement ; in other places there was no marked improvement. Many faulty methods of teaching were still adopted in some of our schools in New England. The instruction of very young children was in many instances improperly conducted. The instruction in reading was in many instances quite deficient. Of the 80,000 scholars in the schools of New Hampshire, not more than 3,000 were good readers when they left school. There was a moral evil connected with the want of ability to read well. Those pupils who read poorly, never acquired a taste for reading, but instead of improving, their leisure time was misspent, and they contracted evil habits. One cause of the deficiency in this branch of education, was the fact that the pupils were not properly classed. Pupils were too often allowed to class themselves.

The instruction in our common schools was far from being as



thorough as it should be, notwithstanding all that had been written and said in relation to superficial instruction. The teacher was not unfrequently thwarted in his endeavor to give thorough instruction. The loose system of instruction had heretofore been adopted in the school, and the pupils and their parents had acquired a prejudice in favor of that system, which it was difficult to overcome. Teachers could not supply the wants of schools without the co-operation of the community. Many a school needed only this influence to make it successful and prosperous. The study of History was not pursued to as great an extent as it should be in our common schools. Political Economy, the Science of Government, Natural Philosophy and Physiology were also much neglected in our schools. There was a prevalent want of interest in respect to the morals of schools. The bad moral practices of schools had excited less anxiety among parents than they ought, because it was thought that the evil influences exerted upon their children at school could be counteracted at home. Too much care could not be taken in arranging the circumstances in which the young were placed. In conclusion the lecturer urged the necessity of being vigilant and active in the cause of common schools.

It was voted that the topics suggested by this lecture be discussed during the remainder of the evening session.

Rev. Dr. SEARS of Newton being called upon by the President, remarked that he agreed with the lecturer that there were some points in which the elementary education in our schools should be improved. The object of elementary education was not so much to give the mind knowledge as to give it discipline. The mental habit, the power to use the intellect in the right way, was what was needed. He thought there were too many studies pursued in our elementary schools. It was far better to give instruction in a few branches, and have that instruction thorough. Elementary education was like laying the foundation of a building. We needed to lay a solid, substantial, enduring foundation. If we did this, a great and good work for life was done, and the whole life might be employed in carrying forward the superstructure. As in science, there were a few principles from which the whole science might be evolved. So it was in education; there was a beginning from which all must proceed. Superficiality destroys the interest of the pupil. We must stimulate his intellectual nature by giving him a knowledge of intellectual power. The pupil must be made to feel that he has within him an intellectual nature, and not be overtaken, and wearied and discouraged by the prosecution of too great a number of studies.

Mr. SHERWIN of Boston said that thoroughness in teaching could not be too strongly insisted upon. We were in an error in urging the child's mind too rapidly, and putting before him subjects which he was unable to comprehend except quite superficially. There was a great deficiency in reading and spelling among the pupils in our common schools. He agreed with the lecturer in regard to the necessity of a more general study of the natural sciences in our schools.

Mr. SULLIVAN of Boston remarked that the subject of moral training, which had been introduced by the lecturer, was one of great importance. The necessity of a moral as well as intellectual instruction in our schools had already been alluded to. The tendencies of the age were to break away from all moral restraint. The moral training of our youth was too much neglected.

The speaker referred to a system of moral instruction which he had adopted in his own school with beneficial results. He was accustomed to require his pupils to recite every Monday morning the text which they had heard discoursed from on the previous Sabbath. This text he remarked upon, and made it a rule of action during the week, constantly referring to it. He also used other means to exert a moral influence upon his pupils. This duty of moral instruction was incumbent on every teacher. Its good effects would be perceived in every department of the school. He urged upon teachers to adopt in their schools some method of moral training.

On motion of Mr. PHILBRICK of Boston, the following resolutions were adopted:—

*Resolved*, That Normal Schools or institutions for the thorough training of teachers, are essential elements in a comprehensive system of public instruction.

*Resolved*, That we rejoice in what has been done by such schools where they have been established, and recommend the establishment of such institutions in the States where they do not exist.

#### WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION.

The Institute assembled at 9 o'clock. The proceedings of yesterday were read by the Secretary. A lecture was then delivered by H. K. OLIVER, Esq., of Lawrence, on the subject of "Teachers, Morals, and Manners." In commencing, Mr. Oliver humorously alluded to the fact that Gov. Briggs had anticipated in some degree the observations he had to offer. His first topic was the importance of religious instruction in our

common schools. He alluded to the influence of Christianity and a Christian education upon the permanency of our institutions. We were morally blind to the great elements of our civil and social happiness. We lived in the midst of blessings and forgot the source from which they came. Blot Christianity out of the history of the race, and what were man, laws and arts and achievements in any department of effort? Education, to be permanent and true in its influence, must largely partake of the element of Christianity. He need not, he said, urge the necessity of religious education. The Romans, in time of danger, gave their consuls power to see that the public received no detriment. The state required teachers to guard her against the inroads of foes more powerful, because more subtle than barbarians of any strength. He would not, of course, recommend any sectarian instruction, but there were certain principles of Christianity about which there was no dispute, and it was the duty of teachers to inculcate those principles. He then spoke particularly of the duty of teachers to cultivate the amenities of life. In their mode of conversation, in the general bearing and carriage, our nation, he said, had fallen into carelessness. We had so good an opinion of ourselves that we were unwilling by our conduct in any way to evince a want of independence. The small, sweet courtesies of life, that betokened good breeding, were too much neglected. In our desire to evince our independence, we too often manifested an utter disregard to the amenities and proprieties of social intercourse. Refinement of manner, and a courteous and dignified bearing, were indicative of Christianity. True, they might exist without Christianity, but they were a link in the chain of Christian virtues, binding humanity to the Deity. The school-room should never be the place where the associations were those of terror, dread, and unhappiness; but on the contrary, should be invested with every attraction possible. If children were accustomed to regard the school as a place of misery, their fellowship with it would be a fellowship of sorrow. For those whose office it was to improve others, the first duty was self-improvement. A calm, even, cheerful demeanor, and a confiding intercourse with their pupils, would inevitably win their confidence and affection. A look, a smile, an encouraging look given by the teacher at the proper moment, would often prove a silken cord, binding his pupil to him which nothing hereafter could disunite. A gentle firmness of manner, an even, cheerful, frank bearing, would always render the authority of the teacher more respected, than any harsh, rough and severe conduct on their part. Self-sacrifice was an import-

ant element to be infused into the character of the teacher. Teachers show their earnestness and their sense of the value and importance of their inculcations by their own example. Every teacher that would perform his work as it ought to be performed, must be studious. His knowledge should be general, not confined merely to an acquaintance with those books which were studied in his school. The teacher could not expect his scholars to heed his praise of truth, if he were untrue. If he would inculcate with success the principles of truth, honesty, justice, and religion, he must exemplify the worth of these virtues in his own life.

If teachers desired that their pupils should be graceful, courteous, and refined, they should illustrate the beauty of the graces in their own persons. It was the duty of teachers to perfect themselves in the general example they exhibited, the words and language they used, their manners and general deportment, and their moral and religious conduct. In conclusion the lecturer declared his best sympathies were with the cause of education. He expressed himself aware of the widely-felt interest in the cause, and his confidence that all who heard him had already resolved to use their best energies in advancing its interest. But there was still need of improvement in the means of conducting the education of youth, and no suggestions could be unacceptable to those who had at heart the promotion of a cause of such vast and permanent importance, and one so intimately connected with the highest interests of our country and our race. After a short recess

A lecture was delivered by THOMAS CUSHING, Jr., of Boston, on "The Teacher of the Present Day." He proceeded to consider the questions,—How does the teacher stand at the present day? What have teachers done for themselves, or what has the progress of society and the arts done for them towards the more effective prosecution of their calling? What might they fairly undertake to perform, and what would the world expect of them? It might be doubted whether, on the whole, the amount of respect now given to the teacher equalled that awarded in former times. No age had probably equalled the present in a theoretical respect for the teacher in the abstract; but deference for the wishes, feelings, and opinions of the individual, were not so strongly marked. This diminution of respect for the teacher's office was owing, in part, to the fact that the teaching of our common schools had often been undertaken by persons having no advantage, in point of culture or preparation, over the mass of the community, which fact had



materially diminished the idea of difficulty supposed to attend the craft and mystery of teaching, and brought its followers within the pale of popular criticism. The growing want of reverence of the present age, and the openness of men in office, and public servants of all kinds to popular comment and criticism, have undoubtedly contributed to produce this result. So far, then, as mere position was concerned, it did not appear that the teacher of the present day had any advantage over his predecessors of the olden time. In fact he did not stand where they stood, on the high vantage ground of real or supposed superior knowledge and skill, without any one to question his authority or interfere with his mode of teaching and governing. What was the teacher to do in this state of things? How was he to regain his ancient position, or was he to try to regain it? It seemed a worthy end for his efforts to attempt to do this to a certain degree, not indeed to endeavor to gain any influence or respect based upon nothing but his office, but to show himself a workman worthy of the name, a master indeed, by skill and power, as well as by courtesy and usage. He must go into the business of teaching with a firm determination to remain in it. He must, therefore, before he aspired to the title of master, be willing to serve an apprenticeship, in order to the thorough understanding and mastering of his trade. He will also prefer to commence his labors under the direction of some person of experience, that his efforts may not be likely to be thrown away, and would aspire to have honorable positions only with increasing years and ability. By proceeding in this way, he would show that he duly honored his calling, and would not approach it carelessly or irreverently, as had too often been the case. The teacher who had the character of his profession and the interests of his pupils at heart, would never resort to quackery in teaching. He would recognize the limitations and varieties established by the Creator in the minds of his pupils as an essential condition in the performance of his work. He would insist upon the presence of a fair degree of intellectual power as an essential pre-requisite to learning anything. He would promise no sudden or rapid progress, but represent that the acquisition of knowledge was to be successfully made only by earnest, patient and long-continued efforts. By such a course some reverence for knowledge and its imparters might be rekindled in the minds of the learners of the present day.

The lecturer alluded to the great multiplication of school books at the present day. Though many of these books might be an improvement upon the old ones, he avowed it to be his opinion

that the interests both of teachers and scholars would be promoted, if not more than one-tenth of the new school books, published within the last half century, had ever seen the light. In what were called the standard studies, the change of books was a decided evil. He considered that it would be an advantage to select some one Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Reader, &c., to keep them in use throughout the length and breadth of the land, for the next quarter of a century at least. There were too many books upon various sciences and branches of knowledge especially adapted for schools. The teacher did not like to exclude them from the school-room, and the result of such a multiplicity of studies was a great deficiency among the pupils of our schools in the fundamental branches of education. The usefulness of schools and the proper business of the schoolmaster ought not to be sacrificed to a blind demand from without for what are vulgarly denominated the higher branches. It was those that prevented thorough teaching of the elements, by occupying the teacher's time and producing a restless, dissatisfied state of mind among the younger scholars, and those parents who think that there is some especial dignity and mystery appertaining to the so-called higher branches. The dignity of the teacher was diminished rather than enhanced by being made a mere medium between a scientific text-book—carefully prepared for the use of schools, perhaps with questions and answers—and learners who blindly receive just so much as is set down in the book, and assimilate it to their own minds by memory only. The modern idea of discipline and control of the young seemed likely, in the opinion of the lecturer, to do much mischief before it had worked out its own reputation. The idea that youth were not to be controlled or compelled to do their duty, but that argument or persuasion alone must be used with them, was an absurdity. A full-grown man could seldom say with truth that he habitually yielded to the promptings of his rational principle. How absurd, then, to expect this of a child.

What might the teacher fairly and conscientiously undertake to do? Feeling that his power was limited, he would represent it to be so. He would promise no specific results, but would only, like the scientific physician, undertake to help nature by all the appliances that his skill and experience suggest. He would put his pupils in the way of working with some effect, by showing them how to work. He would agree to furnish instruction, not comprehension, for scholars. He would have the boldness to state even to fond parents, that some minds were capable of but very moderate scholastic attainments, and had better be

confined to the elements of knowledge. Above all, he would profess no power of transferring his own knowledge to others, whatever their powers, without effort on their part, recognizing no other principle of improvement than work, duly enlightened and regulated by his own superior intellect.

### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Institute met at 3 o'clock. The Nominating Committee reported a list of officers of the Institute for the ensuing year. The report was accepted, and the following gentlemen chosen :—

*President.*—GIDEON F. THAYER, Boston.

*Vice Presidents.*—Thomas Sherwin, Boston; John Kingsbury, Providence, R. I.; Samuel Pettes, Boston; Barnas Sears, Newton, Mass.; Horace Mann, W. Newton, Mass.; Benjamin Greenleaf, Bradford; Geo. N. Briggs, Pittsfield; David Kimball, Needham; William Russell, Merrimac, N. H.; Henry Barnard, Hartford; William H. Wells, Newburyport; Edwin D. Sanborn, Hanover; Alfred Greenleaf, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Nathan Bishop, Boston; Wm. D. Swan, Boston; Charles Northend, Salem; Samuel S. Greene, Providence, R. I.; Roger S. Howard, Bangor, Me.; Benj. Labaree, Middlebury, Vt.; Edwin Wyman, St. Louis; Thomas Cushing, Boston; Rufus Putnam, Salem; Ariel Parish, Springfield; Leander Wetherell, Rochester, N. Y.; Ethan A. Andrews, New Britain, Ct.; Thomas Baker, Gloucester; John Batchelder, Lynn; Daniel Leach, Roxbury; Amos Perry, Providence; Christopher T. Keith, Providence.

*Counsellors.*—Daniel Mansfield, Cambridge; Samuel W. King, Lynn; D. P. Galloup, Salem; A. A. Gammell, Providence; Elbridge Smith, Cambridge; Solomon Jenner, New York; F. N. Blake, Barnstable, Mass.; Charles Hutchings, Wilmington, Del.; Leonard Hazletine, New York; David S. Rowe, Westfield, Mass.; Samuel W. Bates, Boston; D. B. Hagar, West Roxbury.

*Recording Secretary.*—Jacob Batchelder, Lynn.

*Corresponding Secretaries.*—Charles Brooks, Boston; Geo. Allen, Jr., Boston.

*Treasurer.*—Wm. D. Ticknor, Boston.

*Curators.*—Nathan Metcalf, Boston; Wm. O. Ayres, Boston; Samuel Swan, Boston.

*Censors.*—Wm. J. Adams, Joseph Hale, John D. Philbrick, Boston.

Mr. DILLINGHAM offered a resolution that the Institute recommend to teachers to test in their schools the value of the phonetic system as a means of teaching children to spell, analyze and read the English language.

Mr. BATES of Boston moved to lay this resolution on the table.

Dr. J. W. STONE of Boston opposed this motion. The phonetic system, he remarked, had received the approbation of many prominent friends of education. The Ohio Teachers' Association had adopted resolutions on this subject, which went much farther than the resolution before this body. He remarked briefly upon the value of the phonetic system, and the vast benefit it would confer upon all those who were hereafter to learn the English language.

Mr. BATES said that he was by no means opposed to the system. In fact he had not yet examined it, and was not able to form an intelligent judgment in relation to it. He thought that the Institute were not yet prepared to express any opinion upon the subject, and that there was an impropriety in passing such a resolution at present.

Hon. GEO. N. BRIGGS remarked that he knew nothing about the system, but he was ready to say, after witnessing the extraordinary proficiency in reading and spelling, of the children presented to the Institute who had been taught by that system, that if children could be taught to read in that manner in eight or ten months, by any system, it became the friends of education to look into that system, and not hastily to pronounce it a humbug. He would recommend to teachers to test the matter. He would not have the world say that this subject was introduced to the notice of the Institute, and that they, in their wisdom, had declared they would have nothing to do with it. They should not shut their eyes to a system which might prove of great service in advancing the cause of education.

Mr. BATES withdrew his motion, and on motion of Mr. SWAN, of Boston, a committee of five was appointed to consider the whole subject of Phonetics and report at the next meeting of the Institute. Messrs. Swan, Briggs, Dillingham, Bates and Stone, were appointed members of the committee.

The member appointed to deliver a lecture this evening before the Institute, having been prevented from attending, by request of the Chairman, Mr. SWAN of Boston read a lecture on the "Requisites of Success in teaching." He first considered the whole subject of education, which was defined to be the proper training of the physical, intellectual, moral and religious ele-



ments of our nature. The first great requisite to the success of the teacher was the faculty of maintaining good order. He must be master of himself, or he was not fit to be master of others. If he was peevish, fretful, and ill-natured in his intercourse with his pupils, he would fail to command their respect, and could control them only through fear. Physical education did not receive that attention in our schools which its importance demanded. Teachers in the country could perhaps hardly conceive the importance of this branch of education. Children in cities, deprived of proper air and exercise, exhibited in their appearance and their bearing, melancholy testimony of the evil effects resulting from a want of proper attention to physical training.

There was too great a multiplicity of studies pursued in many of our schools, and children now attended schools too much. The consequence was we were rearing a puny, sickly generation. Children should attend school in the morning, but in the afternoon never. They required recreation during a great portion of the day. He believed that the system of keeping school during the whole day would ere long be abandoned.

The lecturer then urged the importance of teaching children to exercise their reflective faculties. The routine of daily studies would not produce beneficial results unless pupils were taught to think carefully upon the various subjects of their studies, and to investigate these subjects thoroughly. The importance of the moral and religious discipline of youth was also dwelt upon by the lecturer, who advanced arguments in favor of a more careful attention to those branches of instruction, similar to those presented by other lecturers on this occasion.

The annual report of the Directors of the Institute for 1850-51, was then presented by the President. The Directors state that the year past has been a year of eminent success to the Association. They allude to the renewal of the grant of \$300 per annum for five years from 1850. A portion of the lectures, with the proceedings of 1850, with a list of members of the Institute from its formation, has been published, and is for sale by the Treasurer. The library is in an improved condition, and the room and accommodations for keeping it are superior to any hitherto enjoyed by the members. The Treasury is in a satisfactory condition. It has been deemed inexpedient for the present to make applications to the Legislatures of the New England States for a grant of money in aid of the Institute, as a grant had been obtained from the Legislature of Massachusetts. The Directors offer it as their opinion that the Institute

is at the height of its usefulness, and they cherish the hope that the interest of its friends will long continue to sustain it.

On motion of Mr. JONES of Hampton Falls, the subject of the use of Keys to Arithmetics was taken up for discussion. This subject elicited considerable discussion, in which Messrs. Jones, Morse of Nantucket, Greenleaf of Bradford, Hagar of W. Roxbury, Wetherell of Rochester, and Northrop of Saxonville, participated. Some of these gentlemen were opposed to the use of Keys, on account of their tendency to create superficial habits of study, and to prevent the acquisition of that intellectual discipline which it was a great object of mathematical studies to promote. Their use was advocated by other gentlemen, on the ground that they merely furnished a desirable help to the scholar, assisting him in ascertaining whether the process he has adopted in solving any problem, has led him to a right result. Without some such aid, it was contended, the scholar could not be satisfied that he was right. If he could not resort to a Key, he must apply to his teacher for information on this point, and the argument presented for the abolition of Keys might apply with equal force to the abolition of teachers.

Hon. HORACE MANN being present, was called upon by the Chairman to give his views in relation to this subject. Mr. Mann remarked that he was opposed to furnishing these facilities to the scholar. It was important that the scholar should be taught to rely in a great measure upon himself, to investigate thoroughly the science which he studied, and to master its principles. After much consultation with the best teachers, he repeated it as their almost unanimous verdict, that the use of the Key led to trickery, and sometimes to outright falsehood. In the use of Keys an accumulation of temptations was brought around the young mind, and these temptations were greater than children often could bear. A habit of deceit was engendered by this means, which had a most detrimental influence upon the moral character of the scholar.

It had been contended that the same objections applied to the consulting of the teacher as had been urged against the use of Keys. There was no force in this argument, for the assistance rendered by the teacher was always rendered discreetly and with a proper regard to the interests of the scholar, while the Key was consulted improperly and injudiciously. It was true that benefit might sometimes be obtained from the use of the Key; but he considered the evils of their use infinitely overbalanced their benefit.

The subject was then laid upon the table.

Mr. SWAN of Boston announced to the Institute the decease, since their last meeting, of Mr. Barnum Field, of Boston, a member of the Institute since its formation. He offered a resolution, that the members of the Institute concur in the resolutions adopted by the teachers of Boston at a meeting held by them shortly after Mr. Field's decease. These resolutions are as follows :—

*Resolved*, That we have learned with surprise and deep emotion the sudden death of our highly esteemed professional associate, Mr. Barnum Field, Master of the Franklin School in this city, where for a quarter of a century he has labored in the cause of public education, with distinguished skill, fidelity and success.

*Resolved*, That we should be culpably insensible to the virtues of our deceased co-laborer, whose merits we have known so well, did we not cherish in our memories his many estimable and noble qualities as a man, a citizen, a neighbor and a friend—his reliable integrity, his conscientious purpose, his firm friendship, his generous heart, and his energetic hand.

*Resolved*, That in the death of Mr. Field, not only have we lost an esteemed associate, and his family a devoted husband and father, but the interests of education a discerning and efficient friend, the cause of truth and good morals a firm and fearless advocate, whose generous influence has long been felt far beyond the immediate sphere of his stated labors, or the city in whose employ he so usefully spent most of the years of his vigorous manhood :— and that, besides the consolation of his Christian hope, it is a solace in his bereavement, to feel assured that, not having outlived his usefulness where most known, it will continue even where he has been unknown, spreading its blessings in an ever-widening circle, and still accomplishing a good which was the earnest, the constant, and the growing desire of his heart.

*Resolved*, That we deeply sympathize with the afflicted family of our departed friend, and earnestly commend them to the protection and blessing of Him who is the God of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless.

Messrs. PHILBRICK and ALLEN, of Boston, briefly addressed the Institute in support of the resolutions, bearing their testimony to the worth and virtues of the deceased.

The resolutions were adopted.

#### WEDNESDAY EVENING SESSION.

Mr. WILLIAM D. NORTHEND of Salem delivered a lecture on "Popular Education and Republicanism." He commenced his lecture by alluding to the peculiar circumstances attending the formation of our government, and to its successful continu-

ance and steady progress during the last three quarters of a century. It became us, as citizens, to inquire what had been the sources of this prosperity, and what could be done to insure its continuance. A government must go into operation by force of delegated or usurped power, or it must continue with the consent of the people. Practically, in all despotic governments, the power of making laws was vested in the sovereign, who relied on physical force for carrying out those laws. In such a government the more ignorant and degraded the people, the more secure the power of the sovereign. But a government like ours depended upon the will of the people. It would of course represent the opinions of the people.

If the people were not intelligent and virtuous, the government would at last become inefficient, and anarchy would ensue, and in the end it would degenerate into a despotism. The principles of the Puritans had been the life-blood of this nation. They sought to instil into the minds of their children those lofty principles of religion, morality, and freedom, which they themselves cherished. Side by side on this barbarian shore they erected their church and school, fit emblems of the two great conservative elements which were destined to bless the nation which they had founded.

The lecturer then alluded to the provisions made for education by the early settlers of New England. This system of education was a powerful element in preparing the way for our present form of government. Other circumstances, indeed, tended to the formation of the Republic.

The character of the people throughout the land was the same ; they had the same interests ; they had contended together against the same oppressions, and an irresistible cordiality and nationality of feeling had been naturally excited. These circumstances had undoubtedly conspired to favor the successful operation of the system, but education had been the great cause of the success of the government thus far, and by education he meant the education of the masses of the people. Other nations had their scholars and their institutions of learning, but in no other country were all the advantages of education open to all classes. The great results which had been accomplished became evident by comparing the condition of our people with that of the people of other civilized countries on the globe.

In this country, there were more people able to read and write, than in any other on the face of the globe, containing five times the number of inhabitants. But it was important to trace the progress of education in this country, and he considered



that in such an examination it would appear that some of the important objects of education were overlooked in the system. Education included moral and religious, as well as intellectual training. It had been said by a distinguished statesman, that intellectual education alone was not enough to assure the moral purity of society. The Puritans gave particular attention to the moral and religious training of youth, and enforced it by various statutory regulations. The spirit of the Colonial statutes in regard to education was exhibited by an enactment, enforcing upon the Professors of the University at Cambridge the duty of impressing upon the minds of youth the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity, and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry and frugality, chastity, moderation and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of human society, and the basis upon which the Republican Constitution is structured.

It was to the establishment of the Christian religion, and the practice of a stern morality, that our fathers looked to secure the welfare of the State. It had been owing to the moral and religious training of the people, as well as to their intellectual education, that we owed the success of our government. Mental culture without moral training, could not sustain our institutions in their purity. It was urged that it was impossible to teach religion in school. The objection was fallacious as far as regarded morals, for the code of morals was the same with all sects. The great principles of Christianity were acknowledged by all sects, and there was no danger of infringing upon the narrow ground of schism or sect. These were all that it was necessary to teach in our schools. They could be taught without interfering with other studies.

There were a thousand nameless ways in which teachers might inculcate moral principles. It was not necessary or proper that a teacher should go further than to inculcate these great principles. It was not his province to inculcate the peculiar forms or doctrines of denomination or sect.

If the public would require teachers to watch over the moral welfare of children, a power and influence for good would be exerted upon the rising generation, which would be almost incalculable in their results.

He did not intend to undervalue intellectual training, he only urged that the mind and the heart should be gained simultaneously. The influence of the strength and power of mind depended upon the manner in which it was exerted. If without the guidance of moral principle, if perverted, the educated

mind was capable of doing far greater injury than any other. Who were the leaders in all the disorganizing movements in this country? Who were those who were strong to shake the pillars of our Union? They were not men deficient in mental acquirements on the contrary; many were distinguished for their intellectual abilities and persuasive eloquence; but they were men into whose hearts the ennobling and conservative principles of our religion never found their way.

There was a fearful responsibility resting upon the instructor, that he mould both the mind and heart aright; the perpetuity of our institutions depended upon the faithful performance of that duty. Upon New England teachers, particularly, this responsibility rested. New England had always been the leaven of the nation. Her sons went forth into all parts of the land, carrying with them and disseminating the great principles of the education they received at home.

A letter was read by the President, from Prof. Arnold Guyot, of Cambridge, announcing his inability to attend the meeting of the Institute to deliver the lecture which was expected from him.

The PRESIDENT announced that the afternoon of to-morrow, (Thursday,) would be devoted to social intercourse. He hoped that the members of the Institute would all improve the opportunity to become acquainted with each other, and that there might be a free and familiar interchange of sentiment between the teachers present in relation to matters connected with their profession.

A gentleman from Vermont announced a meeting of the Teacher's Institute of that State at Waterbury, and in behalf of that Association invited the members of the American Institute to be present on the occasion. On motion, five delegates from the Institute were appointed to attend the meeting in Vermont.

#### THURSDAY MORNING.

The members of the Institute assembled at 9 o'clock. A lecture was delivered by Mr. C. A. GREENE, of Milton, on the subject of "Instruction in Spelling." After some observations upon our present orthography and the difficulties attending its improvement, the lecturer alluded to the phonetic system of spelling, to which he advanced numerous objections.

If this system were adopted he considered that the derivation

of words would be lost, if their spelling were changed. The proposed change would destroy all opportunity for improving the pronunciation of the language: There were many words in which the vowel sound had become corrupt. In all cases where the present pronunciation was the result of an untrained ear, phonetics stopped up the way for improvement. We could get some idea of the manner of spelling which would result from the adoption of the phonetic system, by the consideration of the manner of spelling now adopted by many illiterate persons who wrote phonetically. The lecturer advanced also the objection that the printing of books in phonetic type, would be attended with great labor and difficulty.

The talent for spelling depended upon a discriminating ear, an accurate eye, and the power of analysis. Any exercise tending to develop and strengthen these faculties would assist in the acquisition of correct spelling. Teachers could give to their pupils mental pictures of all the words they were required to spell, but the verbal memory diminished as they grew older, and we had abundant evidence that it was difficult to maintain any accuracy in spelling without constant attention to rules. While the memory of words perished, the memory of principles constantly grew stronger. The lecturer then alluded to the different systems of spelling, and their relative value. In the oral system, the exercise of spelling was solely one of memory. Children had no conception of the meaning or use of the names of the letters which they used in spelling. The same time spent in learning children to spell under this method would enable them to acquire a foreign lesson.

The next step in the oral system was the spelling by sound; but unless the scholar had a good ear and a power of close attention, the oral system would not accomplish thus much for him. Rejecting this system, and considering it established that spelling should be taught by writing, he considered the different methods of instruction in this manner. One of them was to give words from the reading lesson to be spelled. This system dispensed with the spelling-book, which was in many respects desirable. It enabled the teacher to select the proper words for spelling. Another advantage was, that it brought scholars to pay attention to the spelling of words as they read them. There was indeed a want of system in this method. The method he had adopted had been attended with great advantage. Every pupil had a blank book, in which the words were written. He used Worcester's Dictionary, which he went through from beginning to end.

With the lower classes, he was accustomed to write the words on the blackboard, and after being examined by the pupils, to erase them. They were then written by the pupils, and then re-written on the blackboard; all errors in the writing of the pupils were carefully noted. With the higher classes, the words were written but once, and their books afterwards examined, and the words spelled wrong were re-written on the next day. With the most advanced classes, the words were not written at all. The need of a good spelling-book, a scientific treatise on orthography, was urged in conclusion by the lecturer.

Mr. G. F. THAYER of Boston coincided in the views advanced by the lecturer. He alluded to the importance of an attention to the fundamental branches of education, reading, writing, and spelling. In his school, so much was thought of these elements that they were dwelt upon from the time the pupil entered until he left the school. The system of teaching spelling by writing, he had adopted with great advantage.

Mr. GREENLEAF of Bradford remarked that he felt great interest in this subject. There was a very general deficiency in regard to spelling; in fact, it seemed unfashionable to spell correctly. He believed the method of teaching spelling suggested by the lecturer was an excellent one. A scholar might spell well orally, but if called upon to write the words would often make great mistakes. There were a variety of methods to secure excellence in spelling among the pupils of the school. The old custom of having a head to the class was a good one, as it tended to excite a proper emulation among pupils. The practice of spelling-matches in schools was also a good one. The thorough study of spelling and the other elementary branches were at present too much neglected in our schools.

The PRESIDENT remarked that in 1830 he had delivered a lecture before the Institute on the subject of spelling, and one of the methods of teaching spelling which he had then suggested, was almost identical with that recommended by the lecturer. In his school a dictionary was used, and the pupils were required to write the words from dictation. Under this system a habit of correct spelling was generally formed, though in some instances it was almost impossible to render some pupils good spellers. In the method adopted by him, the different classes were required to learn some portion of a page of the reading, so that they might be able to spell any of the words correctly. The words were dictated to the scholars, who wrote them upon their slates. The slates were afterwards examined, and the errors noted. To fix those words wrongly spelled in



the mind, and to prevent the recurrence of the wrong spelling, every scholar was required to write out the words correctly in his copy book.

Another system adopted in his school was calculated to promote habits of correct spelling. No scholar was allowed to make a verbal request of a teacher, but was required to write the request upon his slate, to which no attention was paid unless it was correctly spelled, capitalized, and punctuated. There was not a due appreciation of the importance of the three fundamental branches, in the minds of teachers throughout the land.

On giving instruction in reading, he was accustomed to encourage the children to ask such questions as occurred to them in regard to any portion of the reading lesson. These questions were immediately answered, if the teacher was able to do so; if not, his inability was frankly confessed, and the question answered at some subsequent time. The members of the reading class were all called upon to criticise the reading of their fellows. No reading lesson was passed over until it had been read correctly in every particular. The speaker urged the importance of thoroughness in every branch of teaching. He strongly recommended the practice of a constant review of the studies pursued.

Mr. SHERWIN of Boston mentioned several words which he had heard mispronounced since the meeting of the Institute, as illustrative of the necessity of a stricter attention to the subject of pronunciation.

Dr. STONE of Boston made some remarks in relation to the subject of pronunciation. It was impossible, he said, to teach children to read correctly, without having some standard of pronunciation to which we could appeal. That standard was found in the practice of the best orators and elocutionists, and there was no way in which that standard could become generally known than by clothing the language in a phonetic form. He alluded to a statement of the lecturer that phoneticians intended to abolish the present alphabet. This he denied. They did not intend to annihilate the present orthography, or to introduce so great a change from the present method of spelling as existed between the present orthography, and that adopted in the time of Chaucer. Neither was it the tendency of the phonetic system to prevent the ascertainment of the true derivation of words. Phonetics, in fact, assisted in ascertaining the derivations of words, and presented with more clearness than the present system, the analogies of words.

In answer to the objection that the existence of provincialisms

would necessarily cause different methods of phonetic writing, he observed that it was important to establish some standard of pronunciation, and to print the language in some manner by which that standard might be made generally known.

An informal discussion then ensued on various topics. Dr. ADAMS made some remarks in regard to Keys to arithmetics. He stated that the demand for Keys came in the first place from teachers, and that the demand had never ceased. So long as that demand continued, the Keys would be supplied. He was not entirely opposed to their use, as in some instances they rendered desirable aid to the teacher.

Mr. SULLIVAN of Boston offered some resolutions, recommending greater attention to moral training in schools, which were adopted.

The afternoon of Thursday was devoted to social intercourse. The members of the Institute assembled at the hall, and several hours were very agreeably spent in familiar conversation.

#### THURSDAY EVENING SESSION.

The Institute met at 7 1-2 o'clock. On motion of Mr. PHILBRICK of Boston, it was resolved that the Board of Directors of the Institute be authorized to expend \$50, in three prizes, for essays on subjects and on conditions to be proposed by them.

On motion it was resolved that the Institute deem the adoption of the system of grading schools into primary, grammar, intermediate and high, as the best method of rendering instruction and training economical, thorough and efficient.

A lecture was then delivered by Rev. DARWIN H. RANNEY, of Vermont, on the subject of Physical Education. After urging the importance of the simultaneous and symmetrical training of the mental, moral and physical faculties, the lecturer proceeded to consider the best method of physical training, dwelling at length upon the necessity of proper attention to diet, exercise, air, and clothing. The views he advanced on these subjects, though not new, were presented in a somewhat novel manner. His discourse was plain and practical, and contained many sound and sensible suggestions in regard to the training of the physical man.

After the lecture was concluded, a vote of thanks was passed to the several gentlemen who had favored the Institute with lectures—to the proprietors of the newspapers who had published notices of the meeting gratuitously in their columns—to the Committee of Reception in Keene—to the inhabitants of Keene

for their numerous attentions and hospitality—to the Railroad Companies who had passed members over their roads at a reduced fare, and to the Secretary for the faithful manner in which he had performed his duties during the session.

Mr. PHILBRICK of Boston moved that the thanks of the Institute be presented to the female teachers, who had added to the attractions of the occasion by their presence, for their approving smiles, and their patient attention to the lectures and discussions of the meeting. The ladies, he said, constituted the majority of teachers present, and they had evinced throughout the session the deepest interest in the various exercises. They were among the most faithful, zealous, and devoted members of the profession, and he was one of those who looked hopefully forward to the time when the compensation which they received for their services would be in some measure commensurate with their labors.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Judge PRENTISS of Keene said that in view of the flattering resolution which the Institute had adopted in relation to the inhabitants of that town, he felt authorized to express their gratitude that the place had been selected for the meeting of the Institute. He considered that the meeting would have a good effect upon the community in that part of the State, in renewing their interest in the cause of education.

A resolution was offered by some of the ladies, presenting the cordial thanks of the Association for the display of flowers which had graced the hall from day to day. The resolution was adopted.

Mr. EDWARDS of Keene referred to the vote of thanks which had been passed to the inhabitants of that place, and observed that the obligation conferred was not all on one side. The Institute, he said, had honored the citizens of Keene, by holding their meeting in that town, and in behalf of the citizens he moved a vote of thanks to the Institute for this action on their part. The question was put to the citizens of Keene who were present, and the motion was unanimously carried.

It was voted that a book be provided in which to record the names of those who might hereafter attend the meeting of the Institute.

The Secretary announced that forty members had been added to the Institute since the commencement of the session.

The PRESIDENT remarked that it had been customary at the close of these meetings, for the presiding officer to say something by way of a valedictory, and he could not let the occasion pass

without saying a few words at parting. This had been the largest meeting the Institute had ever enjoyed. It was estimated that five hundred teachers had been in attendance. It was to him a most gratifying sight to see so many teachers in one assembly. It might perhaps be not unbecoming in him to offer them some advice and suggestions in regard to their vocation, but the lectures which had been read to them on the occasion, had conveyed the very best advice which could be offered. He would, however, impress upon them the importance of an attention to the suggestions of the very able and interesting lecture to which they had listened upon the subject of teachers' morals and manners.

The cultivation of the graces and virtues there recommended, could not be too strongly urged upon teachers. Refinement of manners, a mild and cheerful disposition, and, above all, purity of life and conversation, were requisite to success in their vocation. A sense of the weighty responsibility resting upon the teacher, in forming the intellectual and moral character of the youth of our country, should be ever present with them, prompting them to a careful and conscientious performance of their duties, and rendering them ever watchful over their own conduct, that the force of their teachings might not be weakened by a failure on their part to illustrate by their own lives the virtues which they inculcated.

The audience then united in singing Old Hundred, after which the meeting was adjourned until next year.

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### TEACHERS' INSTITUTES

Will be held the ensuing Autumn in the following places, continuing one week each.

At Petersham,	commencing	October	6.
" West Newton,	"	"	13.
" Stoughton,	"	"	20.
" Southbridge,	"	"	27.
" Northborough	"	November	3.
" Barnstable	"	"	10.